Appl. No. Filed Herewith
Amdt. dated June 19, 2003
Preliminary Amendment

10600484

PATENT *updated*

Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following new paragraph before the section marked "BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION," on line 5 of page 1:

--CROSS REFERENCES TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

is now an U.S. Patent 6,614,366

This application is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/076,623, filed February 14, 2002, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/757,078, *is now an U.S. Patent 6,373,406* filed January 8, 2001, which is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/246,015, filed February 5, 1999, issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,307,487, which claims priority to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 60/101,473, filed September 23, 1998, now abandoned, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference for all purposes.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--In operation, for each received output symbol with key I and value B(I), decoder 155 does the following. Key I is provided to value function selector 210, weight selector 215 and associator 220. Using K and key I, weight selector 215 determines weight W(I). Using K, key I and W(I), associator 220 produces the list AL(I) of W(I) positions of input symbols associated with the output symbol. Optionally, using K and I, value function selector 210 selects value function F(I). Then, I, B(I), W(I) and AL(I), and optionally F(I), are stored in a row of output symbol buffer 405. Value function selector 210, weight selector 215 and associator 220 perform the same operation for decoder 155 as described for encoder 115. In particular, the value function F(I), the weight W(I) and the list AL(I) produced by value function selector 210, by weight selector 215 and by associator 220 in Fig. 5 are the same for the same key I as for the corresponding parts shown in Fig. 4. If K varies from input file to input file, it can be communicated from the encoder to the decoder in any conventional manner, such as including it in a message header.--